

TITLE

Pekin Lilac Tree Named 'SunDak'

GENUS AND SPECIES

[0001] *Syringa pekinensis*

CULTIVAR DENOMINATION

[0002] 'SunDak'

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of Pekin lilac tree, botanically known as *Syringa pekinensis*, and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name 'SunDak'. 'SunDak' is a product of a planned tree selection program which had the objective of creating a new cultivar of Pekin lilac tree having striking coppery-bronze exfoliating bark pattern, improved winter hardiness and various aesthetic qualities as listed in the Detailed Description of the Plant.

[0004] The new cultivar is a selection of *Syringa pekinensis*, and was discovered by applicant among seedlings grown from parental trees growing on the North Dakota State University (NDSU) campus and was transplanted on May 16, 1983 to the NDSU campus.

[0005] The first act of asexual reproduction of 'SunDak' was accomplished by grafting onto *Syringa pekinensis* rootstocks by applicant from the initial selection on February 8, 1996 in a controlled environment at NDSU, Fargo, North Dakota. Horticultural examination of selected units initiated on June 29, 1999 has demonstrated that the combination of characteristics as herein disclosed for 'SunDak' are firmly fixed and are retained through successive generations of asexual reproduction.

[0006] 'SunDak' has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity, and day length. The following observations, measurements and comparisons describe the plant grown on the NDSU campus or plants grown under greenhouse/field conditions, which approximate those generally used in commercial practices.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0007] This new lilac tree is illustrated by the accompanying photographs which show the entire tree, close-up of the flower panicles, trunk, close-up of the trunk showing exfoliating bark patterns and a close-up of the seed clusters (capsules). The colors shown are as true as can be reasonably obtained by conventional photographic procedures.

FIG 1 shows the complete tree in dense foliage;

FIG 2 is a close-up of the dense foliage with flower panicles;

FIG 3 shows the trunk;

FIG 4 is a close-up of the trunk showing exfoliating bark patterns; and

FIG 5 is a close-up of the seed clusters (capsules).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW PLANT

[0008] The following traits and characteristics describe the new cultivar.

[0009] Classification:

Origin - - Species is native to China; this selection originated from seed collected off of trees growing on the NDSU campus for over 50 years.

Parentage - - Seed parent: *Syringa pekinensis* – Pekin Lilac

Pollen parent: *Syringa pekinensis* – Pekin Lilac

Species - - *Syringa pekinensis*

Common names - - Pekin Lilac

Commercial name - - Copper Curls™ Pekin Lilac

[0010] Trunk

Multiple stem - - Yes, two main trunks forming clump

Size -- At 21 years of age, average diameter of two trunks, 19.1 cm

Bark - - Coppery-orange (RHS Greyed Orange Group 164A to 165B), average length of exfoliating sheets 3.6 cm

Height - - At 21 years old = 8.1m; width = 6.2m

Growth Habit or Form - - Upright, broadly oval to rounded

Growth rate - - 35 cm per year under sod conditions

[0011] Branches:

Angle of attachment - - Average angle of 13 branched pairs = 33.0°
 Spacing - - Variable
 Size - - Crown diameter of tree, 6.2 m; height = 8.1 m
 Bark - - Coppery-orange (RHS Greyed Orange Group 164A to 165B)

[0012] Lenticels:

Size - - Range from 3mm to 8mm; average = 5mm
 Color - - Beige
 Quantity - - Plentiful

[0013] Foliage:

Size of leaf:
 Length - - Range 4.0 – 7.6 cm, average 6.1 cm
 Width - - Range 2.4 - 7.3 cm, average 4.1 cm
 Shape of leaf - - Ovate to ovate-lanceolate
 Margin - - Entire
 Texture - - Medium
 Pubescence distribution - - None (glabrous)
 Color - - Upper side, RHS Green Group 137A/B
 Petiole - - Range from 8-30 mm; average 18 mm long
 Ribs and veins - - Scarcely veined
 Thorns and spines - - None
 Buds - - Variably ovate
 Size - - Length averages 4.2 mm; width averages 3.0 mm
 Color - - RHS Greyed Orange Group 164A/B

[0014] Flower

Color - - Creamy-white (RHS White Group 155D)
 Shape - - Oblong-conical to pyramidal to nearly globose panicle containing many florets.
 Size - - Length: Range of 10.2 cm to 23.4 cm; average = 15.6 cm
 Width: Range of 10.2 cm to 23.4 cm; average = 16.7 cm

[0015] Fruit

Shape - - Oblong-conical to pyramidal to nearly globose, containing many capsules

Size - - Length: Range from 9.0 cm to 22.2 cm; average = 14.4 cm

Width: Range of 9.0 cm to 22.2 cm; average = 15.5 cm

Fruit Structure - - Two-celled oblong capsule

Size: Range of 14 to 20 mm; average = 17 mm long

Color: RHS Greyed Orange Group 164B/C to 165 B/C

[0016] Seed

Size - - Length: Range of 13 to 16 mm; average = 14.8 mm

Width: Range of 4 to 7 mm; average = 6.0 mm

[0017] Insect And Disease Resistance

No apparent disease or insect problems to date.

COMPARISON WITH MOST SIMILAR CULTIVAR

[0018] Of the commercial lilac trees known to the applicant, the most similar in comparison to 'SunDak' are the cultivars *Syringa pekinensis* 'Morton' – China Snow® and *Syringa pekinensis* 'DTR 124' – Summer Charm® (US Plant Patent 8,951). China Snow® is characterized by upright, rounded form with cherry-like, amber-colored, exfoliating bark. Summer Charm® is reputed to be a small, spreading tree with attractive smooth bark, and dark green, lustrous foliage with no mention of exfoliating bark. Compared to these two cultivars, 'SunDak' has a number of important attributes such as:

- 1) Striking, distinctly coppery-orange exfoliating bark pattern; the bark with its attractive sheen tends to peel and separate in shaggy curls;
- 2) Large, attractive, abundantly-produced, creamy-white flower panicles;
- 3) Attractive seed clusters (capsules) which change from green to tannish-brown and cling to the branches for added winter effect;
- 4) Upright, broadly oval to rounded form;

- 5) Typically grows multiple-trunked; and
- 6) Improved winter hardiness (-34° to -37°C).